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Many valuable unpublished papers and letters of his are in the archives of the State, and in the library of the Historical Society.

MARCH MEETING.

In consequence of the unfinished state of the rooms, in the new arrangement, the Standing Committee voted to dispense with the meeting at the rooms at noon, and to accept the invitation of the President to meet at his house in the evening. Accordingly, the Society held their stated monthly meeting at the house of Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, in Pemberton Square, Boston, on Thursday evening, March 12, at half-past seven o'clock; the President in the chair.

The Recording Secretary being necessarily detained from the meeting, Mr. Deane was chosen to that office *pro tem.*

The Corresponding Secretary *pro tem.* transmitted to the meeting the following communications; viz.: A letter from Dr. Josiah Bartlett, of Concord, tendering his resignation as a member of this Society; a letter from William Paver, Esq., of York, England, dated Jan. 29, 1857, with his thanks for his election as a Corresponding Member, and his acceptance thereof; and, accompanying this letter, "a list of the pedigrees contained in his consolidated visitations of Yorkshire, being those taken in 1584, 1612, and 1665," and therewith "a list of alliances and matches" containing all the names mentioned in the "visitations" other than those of the families whose pedigrees are given.

Dr. George Derby, through the President, presented to the Society "A Sermon preached at Cambridge before his Excellency Thomas Hutchinson, Esquire, Governor, and His Honor Andrew Oliver, Esquire, Lieutenant-Governor," May 29, 1771. By John Tucker, A.M., pastor of the First Church in Newbury."

Dr. Hough, of Albany, through Mr. Sparks, presented to the Society a volume of "Papers relating to the Island of Nantucket," recently published.

The President presented to the Society a copy which he had caused to be made of the College Laws of 1655, from the ancient copy exhibited at the last meeting, made to guard against accident or loss.

He also called the attention of the Society to two interesting relics before him. One was a small mahogany table, well supplied with drawers, formerly used by Lord Chatham; passing from him to Sir John Temple, and thence coming down, an heirloom, to its present owner. Upon the table was a portable mahogany writing-desk, of thorough workmanship, about twelve inches wide, sixteen inches long, and four inches deep. At one end is a drawer, parted off for ink, pens, letters, and paper. Within is a convenient writing-desk, lined with velvet, where is seen, in the handwriting of Mr. Jefferson, the following memorandum; viz., —

"Tho. Jefferson gives this writing-desk to Joseph Coolidge, jun., as a memorial of affection. It was made from a drawing of his own, by Ben. Randall, cabinet-maker, of Philadelphia, with whom he first lodged on his arrival in that city, in May, 1776; and is the identical one on which he wrote the Declaration of Independence. Politics, as well as religion, has its

superstitions. These, gaining strength with time, may one day give imaginary value to this relic for its association with the birth of the great charter of our independence.

"MONTICELLO, Nov. 18, 1825."

In the drawer were three Paris visiting-cards, having upon them representations of the Coliseum, &c.; and an original visiting-card of John Adams, bearing simply, in large handwriting, "Mr. Adams."

A copy of the Bible, once belonging to Melancthon, and containing many of his manuscript notes, was exhibited at the meeting. It is now in the possession of our associate, Mr. Livermore.

Mr. BOWDITCH exhibited a copy of Marco Polo's Travels, 1496, and some other curious books.

Rev. WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D.D., of Albany, was elected a Corresponding Member.

Hon. CHARLES H. WARREN was elected a Resident Member.

Rev. Dr. FROTHINGHAM made a feeling allusion to the death of Dr. Kane, and offered the following resolution:—

Whereas the Supreme Disposer of events has withdrawn from the service of his country and of science Dr. Elisha Kent Kane, to live henceforth in history, and in the admiring respect of all wise and good men; therefore—

Resolved, That the Massachusetts Historical Society desire to join in the tribute of honor and regret which, at home and abroad, is now paying to his memory.

We recognize in the self-sacrificing labors of our noble countryman something far greater than a spirit of adventure, however daring; than a curiosity to penetrate further through

the Polar ice to the Polar Sea, however enlightened that curiosity might have been ; or even than a sympathetic impulse urging him to seek for tidings of his lost predecessor among those dreariest of wastes. We see in them something far more than new wonders of nature beheld and deep secrets of science explored, though his description of that awful scenery will thrill the hearts of myriads of readers, and though his researches in those latitudes of frozen night may contribute aid to the ship that is sailing upon the warm Gulf Stream or among the sunny islands of the Pacific Ocean. We discern in him those moral qualities of a truly heroic man, which set him higher than any of his exploits, and expand him beyond all limits of the places where his work and trials were undergone. We wish to record our sense of his eminent personal worth, fitting him for command, preparing him for generous achievements, and entitling him to a pure fame such as men love to look at, and grow better as they look at it.

On this day of his burial in his native city of Philadelphia, we would make commemoration of those virtues which are all that can now bestead him, and which the ground cannot cover up. We call to mind his modest resolution ; his gentle force ; his brave prudence ; his cheerful martyrdom ; his religious reverence, so quiet and unobtrusive, but so strong ; and the moral influence, which, by those great endowments, he was able to exert upon those who were placed under his charge. Such an example of the highest and truest manhood is of a kind to perpetuate its likeness in the world, to be effective over many who never saw his face, and to take hold on the hearts of the coming generations. We therefore think that it fitly belongs to this Historical Society to put upon its record some testimonial to a private character and public service which help to redeem history from the disgraces that so often defile its annals.

The foregoing resolution having been seconded by Mr. PRESCOTT, —

Voted unanimously to adopt the same.

Dr. ROBBINS, from the Standing Committee, reported that the three oldest volumes of the manuscript-records of the Society had been carefully rebound in one volume, designed to be preserved in a separate place of deposit.

Messrs. Bowditch and Russell were appointed a Committee to examine the Treasurer's account for the year, and report at the next meeting.

The President communicated a letter from the Recording Secretary, Mr. Willard, necessarily detained from this meeting, declining to be considered a candidate for re-election.

Messrs. Lincoln, Gray, and Deane were appointed a Committee to nominate a list of officers to be balloted for at the annual meeting in April.

On motion of Dr. ROBBINS, — *Voted*, That a Committee of five be appointed to revise the By-laws of the Society, and report at the next meeting; and thereupon Messrs. Robbins, Hillard, Livermore, Chandler, and Deane were appointed to constitute that Committee.

On motion of Mr. SAVAGE, — *Voted*, That the President, with Messrs. Clifford and Brigham, be a Committee to apply in behalf of this Society to the Legislature, at its present session, for such addition to, and amendment of, our charter as shall permit us to enlarge the number of our resident members, not to exceed one hundred; and to make election of such associate members living without the limits of this State, or of honorary members residing without or within the limits of the Com-

monwealth, as the Society, in its discretion, may determine.

Mr. ELLIS presented a number of valuable papers, consisting in part of letters from William Vassall and others, relating to lands in Maine ; and also a petition, dated March, 1777, from sundry persons in Pownalborough in that Province, calling themselves Episcopalians, "great part of them French and Dutch German Protestants," praying that they "may be freed from being assessed or taxed in any parish for ministerial rates," &c., as they now pay a minister of their own.

Mr. SAVAGE presented to the Society copies of letters of Rev. John Allin, the ejected Vicar of Rye, Sussex, 1662, relating to his father in New England, of date 1663 to 1673-4. These letters were sent to Mr. Savage by Mr. Cooper, of London.

ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 9, 1857.

The Society held their annual meeting on Thursday, April 9, at noon, at their rooms in Tremont Street, Boston ; the President, Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, in the chair.

The Librarian submitted the following report:—

Since the last annual meeting, there have been added to the library, by donation, a hundred and eighty-six printed volumes, five hundred and ninety-one pamphlets, two maps, and two unbound files of newspapers ; all of which have been arranged and catalogued. The number of volumes taken from the library, by members and others, since the last report, is more